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AS RECORDS MANAGERS TRAIN FOR TOMORROW

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It has been said that paperwork is the recording, storing, analysis and reporting or transmitting of information to help somebody do his job better. It also can be said that paperwork has generally progressed from crudeness to sophistication to confusion. The current explosion of paperwork and information is having its effect on the individual as well as operations in commerce, industry and government. How to cope with this problem depends entirely on the area affected. The problem is general, but the solutions are quite specific.

The handling of information and records (paperwork) is, indeed, a science and becoming increasingly complex. As a complex science it requires management by people highly trained and creative. We are faced with the prospect of transferring the management of records from file drawer storage and stuffing it into a computerized operation. This is no easy task and the job requirements must be necessarily elevated considerably.

For example, most fabrication and assembly manufacturing companies find it necessary to maintain large files of records that describe the structure and/or makeup of their products. These records are required for planning and executing the manufacturing processes. Product structure records are referenced by various nomenclatures such as bills of material, parts lists and where-used lists.

Within a typical manufacturing organization, the original product structure documents are resequenced, reformatted or summarized to suit individual requirements of various departments. Frequently the engineering, manufacturing, financial and other departments or functions each keep separate product structure files. This requires a duplication of file-maintenance effort and almost inherently involves working with data that contains unwanted differences and inaccuracies.

There are two broad application areas for product structure data:

1. The preparation of reference documents in original or rearranged form. These records may be used by sales, repair, service, engineering, production planning, shop assembly, dispatching and other departments or functions.
2. Applications such as materials planning, inventory control, and cost analysis which use product structure data as a framework for processing.